

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please replace paragraph 68 (page 17, lines 12-16) with the following text:

[0068] The simple parity coding (Hamming distance of 2) takes place in TCAM coding circuits 115. FIG. 1B is a block diagram of the parity encoding circuit of FIG. 1A 100, a padding and masking device 125 and a shift register 130. One or more separate devices are used to perform padding (by 0 or 1), and masking. Shifting may be performed in the shift register 130.